

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 25-26, 30-31, 37, 41-42, and 44-46 are pending in the current application and stand rejected as being unpatentable over United States Patent 6,148,377 to Carter et al. (hereinafter "Carter").

Claims 25-26, 30, 37, 41, and 44-46 are amended. Support for the claim amendments can be found throughout the application and, among other places, at Pages 3-6. No new matter has been added.

An interview was conducted with Examiner Shawn Gu on May 11, 2007. During the interview, proposed claim language was discussed and the Carter reference was also discussed. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for his assistance and helpful suggestions for clarifying the claim language.

Claim 25

Claim 25 recites an information backup system comprising "a plurality of computer systems, each including a disk subsystem and a network interface, *wherein each computer system is configured to generate disk I/O requests and to direct said disk I/O requests to said network interface...* a functionally coherent and physically distributed disk storage device comprising a plurality of disk storage portions each within the disk subsystem of a computer system among said plurality of computer systems, wherein *said distributed disk storage device responds to said disk I/O requests from said plurality of computers as a single logical disk.*" Applicant respectfully submits that Carter does not disclose a system having at least these features.

Carter describes a virtual memory system built from resources that are supplied by network nodes. Individual nodes interact with Carter's virtual memory system using standard memory management techniques such as allocating, locking, and mapping pages of memory. See, Carter at col. 8, lines 48-60. A global address signal is used to access the various network resources. For example, Carter proposes that a 128-bit addressing scheme may be utilized on 32-bit computers in order to address the large number of memory locations. See, Carter at col. 2,

lines 37-45. Thus, it is clear that Carter describes a virtual memory system and that each computer interacts with Carter's virtual memory system as if it were a large random access memory. See, Carter at col. 8, lines 13-20 ("Accordingly, each local node 12 views the network as a set of nodes that are each connected to a large shared computer memory.").

By contrast, the present invention includes a distributed disk storage device that individual computers access by generating disk I/O requests. As claimed "each computer system is configured to generate disk I/O requests and to direct said disk I/O requests to said network interface." The system provides "a functionally coherent and physically distributed disk storage device comprising a plurality of disk storage portions each within the disk subsystem of a computer system among said plurality of computer systems" and the distributed disk storage device "responds to said disk I/O requests from said plurality of computers as a single logical disk." Thus, unlike Carter, individual computers interact with the inventive system using disk I/O requests and the distributed disk storage device responds to the disk I/O requests as a single logical disk. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 37, 44, 45, 46

Claims 37, 44, 45, and 46 each recite limitations similar to those discussed in connection with claim 25 and each is believed allowable over the cited reference for at least the reasons previously given.

Claim 37, for example, recites "the unified logical disk storage device being accessed by disk I/O requests generated by each of said plurality of computer systems; and performing disk I/O at each of said plurality of computer systems to access the unified disk storage device." Carter does not disclose a unified logical disk storage device that computers access through disk I/O requests.

Claim 44 recites a system comprising a distributed disk storage device "wherein said computer systems access said distributed disk storage device as a single logical disk by generating disk I/O requests." Carter does not disclose that computer systems access a single logical disk using disk I/O requests as claimed.

Claim 45 recites a disk storage device wherein "computer systems access said distributed disk storage device as a single logical disk by generating disk I/O requests." Carter does not disclose a distributed disk storage device as claimed.

Claim 46 recites "organizing said plurality of disk storage portions into a distributed data storage device; and providing disk I/O access to said distributed disk storage device, wherein any of said plurality of computer systems can access said distributed disk storage device as a single logical disk by making disk I/O requests." Carter does not disclose at least these limitations.

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 37, 44, 45, and 46 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 26, 30-31, 41-42

Dependent claims 26, 30-31 depend from claim 25. Dependent claims 41-42 depend from claim 37. Accordingly, each dependent claim is believed allowable over the cited reference for at least the reason that it depends from an allowable base claim as discussed above. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 26, 30-31, and 41-42 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

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PATENT

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 858-350-6100.

Respectfully submitted,



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